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Official paper of Clatsop County and the City of Astoria.

THE WEATHER
Western Oregon and Washington—Fair.
Eastern Oregon and Washington, Idaho—Snow.

THE LUCKY IRISH.
On the night of St. Patrick's day next, in New York City, the lucky Irish of that old Dutch town, are to sit under the brilliantly banked wisdom of three of the foremost men of the nation—Secretary of War Taft, Governor Johnson, of Minnesota, and Governor Hughes, of New York, each and all in line for the presidency, and each a notable and honored figure in the government and business of the American people. These are commanding personalities and liable to be profoundly entertaining on such an occasion, and as they are to eschew politics altogether, there will, undoubtedly, be a literal "feast of reason and flow of soul" that will satisfy the ardor even of an Irish audience, the which rarely gets its fill of sheer entertainment. The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, the hosts on this occasion, are the envy of the land, and especially of the ultimate west of Clatsop, in Oregon, far enough away to growl with safety, at the denial forced upon us.

A NATION'S LESSON.
The American people are aghast at the terrific news, from Cleveland, of the death of 170 school children in a suburban fire-trap of a school building, and sickened with the pitiful details of the holocaust. It is one of those glaring horrors that leap out of the very Heavens, as it were, to stall and stupefy the people, and on the rally make them think hard, and sensibly, all down the line, of the conditions that are confronting their own little ones in the schools at home. It is safe to say that in all America today there is not a parent but is putting up peremptory and anxious inquiries as to the conditions of the buildings where their children are housed during the school hours of the five-day week; and one good that will come out of the miserable "slaughter of the innocents," is this sharp and inspired investigation and the changes for good that shall ensue.

The physical safety of congregated children takes precedence over the whole category of conditions in which they figure publicly, and privately, and the most assured conditions, in this particular, should obtain at all times and in all places, even if what follows in their behalf, be abated in cost and scope of service. The life of a single child should be placed above and beyond the range of cost of any scientific provision that can be devised and utilized for its safety; and the safety of the faithful teachers who must stand by them in all perils; and until this principle prevails everywhere in the country, we may look for just such frightful surprises as this.

The ground-floor, detached school-room, with out-bearing doors on all sides, heated from a central and detached cellar-way, is the ideal of safety, health, and comfort; and its additional cost a sheer begging of the prime question. Once it is adopted and heralded, the plan will supercede all others, and become the standard in city and country.

Astoria may well begin to look into the conditions prevalent here; and take such steps as may be necessary to reduce the peril (rarely thought of except at the unsuspected moment); apply such additional sources of safety as common-sense (not parsimony) may suggest; put the whole system of buildings, and even their separate rooms, in instant touch with the fire department, by means of call boxes electrically equipped; that telephones,

SCANDINAVIAN-AMERICAN SAV. BANK
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one or more, be put in every building of the district; that hydrants, and hose in ample lengths, be installed at, and in, each building; that fire-escapes be constructed everywhere, and that drills be thoroughly and constantly prosecuted by the teachers, in this especial behalf. With her 1500 children housed in two, and three, storied structures and none, or practically none, with the common elements of aid and safety enumerated above, she stands a fair show of making such another presentation of communal stupidity and criminal negligence as is heralded from the Ohio town. The nearest fire-call box in this city, is one block away from the school building next to it, and in the cases of the other five, they are from two to four blocks distant; every building in the district is above the common traffic level from 50 to 100 feet and time is of the essence of this paramount question.

Be it understood there is nothing of reproach in these lines: They are written in the spirit that makes for the real progress of the city and mean nothing but good to all concerned and especially the helpless children that are, primarily, the chief concern of our lives, our homes, of our government and all its institutions, first and always.

CLATSOP-TILLAMOOK.
The county court is taking care of the proposed opening up of the inter-county highways that are to connect us with our southern neighbor, and it is safe to conclude that by the Fall of 1909 we shall be in ready and traversable touch with the Tillamookians, who are engaged on the same popular quest and doing their share to form the junction, via the sea line and through the interior.

It will be a good day for all concerned when the roads shall be open between the county capitals and there will be business done over them undreamed of now; besides the impetus it must give to railway construction over the parallel territory. It may be a bit costly, primarily, but it will pay us handsomely in the long run and in a hundred ways. Push it, gentlemen!

THE PARCEL-POST.
It is right and expedient that the people of the United States be put on a level of advantage with all the civilized countries of the world in the matter of the parcel-post service. It has been fought for years by the express companies of the land, but their long success in heading it off, is about to end. The demand for this popular and rational service is almost universal and the sooner it comes the better. What of popular service is good for the slower nations abroad must certainly hold something of excellence for this up-to-date people, despite the cry-down of the express people who monopolize the advantage for the last half century or more.

EDITORIAL SALAD
The night riders of Kentucky have put the nightmare on the shelf as a weak invention.

The Democratic party hears little now of the crime of '73, but there is little prospect that it will ever escape from the Bryan scoop of '96.

If Kentucky had never been cursed with Goebelism it would have escaped 10 years of bad government for which the cure is slow and difficult.

A fleet of modern battleships at anchor off shore must be a great spectacle to a people unaccustomed to anything more majestic than a Peruvian bark.

Marseilles is shipping beans to Boston in British ships, which suggests that Faneuil Hall should speak and let the world know what is going wrong.

It would be an easy matter for the Missouri mule to reach Paris overland by way of Siberia. But the automobile is doing pretty well for a modern introduction.

Ten years in prison will do for Gen. Stoessel. Remembering the kind of army he commanded, the Russians ought to be lenient—about one part justice and two parts mercy.

A MYSTERY.

New Mother's Questioning Struck Her Son William Junior.
William junior had been cautioned by his mother not to do a number of things, too many for brief mention, but all very dear to him, and he had promised. However, after dinner his mother, happening to look out of an upstairs window, saw him in the midst of a transgression and reserved the matter in her memory.
That evening she detained William by her knee and questioned, as mothers do.
"Have you been a good boy all day, Willie?"
"Yes, ma'am."
"Real good?"
"Y-yes, ma'am."
"And not done any of those things that mother told you not to do?"
"Y-y-yes, ma'am."
"Not a single one?"
William looked at her sharply, his mouth open.
"Are you me?" he demanded.
"Why, no."
"Are you God, then?"
"Certainly not."
"Then how did you know I was sliding down that board?"—Lippincott's.

May and December.



"Yes, madam, I am going to marry Watkins."
"Why, he is old enough to be your father!"
"I know he is, but unfortunately he doesn't seem to care for mother!"—Meggendorfer Blatter.

Cultivating the Power of Observation.
"How many seed compartments are there in an apple?" he asked. No one answered. "And yet," continued the school inspector, "all of you eat many an apple in the course of a year and see the fruit every day probably. You must learn to notice the little things in nature."

The talk of the inspector impressed the children, and at recess the teacher overheard them discussing it. A little girl, getting her companions around her, gravely said:
"Now, children, just suppose I am Mr. Robinson. You've got to know more about common things. If you don't, you'll all grow up to be fools. Now, tell me, Maggie," she continued, looking sternly at a playmate, "how many feathers are there on a hen?"—Woman's Home Companion.

The Force Accounted For.
"Where's the editor?"
"Runnin' a race with the sheriff to git warm."
"And the foreman?"
"Tryin' to git the stove red hot with rejected poetry."
"Well, where's the office boy?"
"Tryin' to mortgage the paper to buy a snow shovel."—Atlanta Constitution.

The Retort Venomous.
"So this is your widely advertised dollar table d'hote dinner, is it?" said the indignant would be diner as he pushed aside an entree which he could not masquerade. "Why, this is the last place in the world I would recommend to friends."
"Don't blame me, sir," said the saffaced waiter. "Send your enemies here."—New York Press.

No Option.
Barber (pausing in the mutilation)—Will you have a close shave, sir? Victim (with a gasp)—If I get out of this chair alive, I shall certainly consider it a very close shave.

The supreme excellence is simplicity.—Longfellow.

COFFEE
A middling steak and first-rate coffee are better than middling coffee and first-rate steak. Consider the cost.
Your grocer returns your money if you don't like Schilling's Best; we pay him.

PRECIOUS GEMS
General Electric Company Large Users of Them.

One of the most interesting features of the great industry conducted by the General Electric Company is its trade in precious stones. In the course of a year the company uses many thousand dollars worth of diamonds and sapphires which are being constantly shipped in from Australia, Holland, London, Paris, Brazil and New Zealand.
True, the diamonds taken separately are not worth so very much as they are small, and the sapphires are worth even less. Nevertheless, the quantity used in aggregate cost amounts to a large sum as it takes but a small tube an inch long to hold \$200 worth.
The stones are used for bearings in electric meters such as are employed to register the number of kilowatt hours of energy used in the home. In order that the meters shall be accurate there must be practically no friction in the bearings. The mechanism of a meter turns in proportion to the amount of lights burned or energy used. The wearing parts must be as hard as possible that constant use will not wear and create additional friction, consequently diamonds and sapphires have to be used in the shafts bearings. The diamond is the hardest substance in the world and the sapphire ranks a close second. The bearings made of these precious stones have a very long life and though they originally cost more, they are cheapest in the long run. It is the electric company and not the customer that loses when the meter registers inaccurately, so in the large meters for factories, stores, etc., the diamonds are used for all the bearings and the common house meter bearings are made from sapphires. As hard as the sapphires are they will begin to wear after a few years.
The General Electric Company receives its sapphires by express sewn up in a stout canvas sack. They are sent in the rough just as they come from the ground in far away Ceylon. The sapphires in the rough are always six sided and the first task is to cut them down to the proper shape for the meter bearings. Of course the only thing that will cut a sapphire is a diamond, so the sapphire are stuck fast to a smooth surface and then held against a fast revolving wheel. The rim of this wheel is hammered full of small particles of diamonds. Each side of the sapphire is polished until it is perfectly smooth and the size is much reduced. A small cup is made in one side and the gem is ready for its duties in the electric meter.
Before the diamonds reach the company they are polished on one side. This work is usually done in Holland where the stones are first shipped from the mines in Africa and New Zealand. The cup is made in this side with the use of delicate machines and diamond dust.
The work of preparing the precious stones is very delicate and requires the service of the most skilled workmen. Scores of employees in a large room sit before the machines getting the diamonds and sapphires ready for use. Each workman is given 100 stones and after he has polished and cupped them he hands the stones to an inspector. The inspector takes a fine needle and a powerful magnifying glass and carefully examines each one. If he finds the slightest scratch or flaw the stone is sent back to the to be finished over. The cup must be absolutely perfect so that it will not retard the meter shaft and cause inaccuracies in the statement of current used. The inspector's sense of touch must be accurate and his eye trained to note the most infinitesimal imperfection. If 20 out of a hundred stones are perfect the employee, who does his work by the piece, is lucky. The rest are worked over until they are also right.
Visitors to this department always ask if the diamonds are not occasionally stolen by the employees. In the first place the workmen are honest, skilled and tried men. Secondly, it would be quite impossible for them to get away with a single stone so carefully is the system kept. Each one of the gems is kept track of by a card system. The head of each department knows just how many stones were turned over to him and has to account for every one. He in turn gives a certain number to each foreman and they have to account for every gem. The foreman gives each employee a hundred at a time and holds him individually responsible for their safe keeping. If a single stone out of the many arriving every day by registered mail were to be missing it could be traced in a few minutes to the person having it last.

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